



**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION**

Governor Charles D. Baker
Lt. Governor Karyn E. Polito
EEA Secretary Matthew A. Beaton
DCR Commissioner Carol I. Sanchez

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DCR Commissioner Opens Newly Renovated Weeks Bridge During Annual RiverSing Celebration

Boston - Monday, September 21, 2015- Yesterday, Department of Conservation and Recreation Commissioner (DCR) Carol Sanchez joined with local officials at a ribbon cutting ceremony to unveil the renovated John Weeks Bridge over the Charles River connecting Boston and Cambridge. The Weeks Bridge is one of DCR's most heavily trafficked footbridges and serves as a vital connection between Cambridge and Boston. The goal of the rehabilitation was to improve accessibility, perform basic structural repairs, and maintain and restore historic character.

"The John Weeks Bridge has played a critical role in the development of the Charles River community and these improvements will ensure its continued use for years to come," **said EEA Secretary Matthew Beaton.** "DCR's renovations **will improve** recreational opportunities **for** all by increasing accessibility on the surrounding paths and bridge while restoring the eroding riverbanks along the Charles River."

The footbridge was originally opened in 1927 to carry pedestrian traffic from Harvard's Brighton campus to the main Cambridge campus. It is one of the most popular places to view the annual Head of the Charles Regatta along the Charles River.

"DCR is committed to providing universal access to all our properties and facilities and these renovations will allow visitors of all abilities to enjoy the historic Weeks Bridge and surrounding Charles River," **said DCR Commissioner Carol Sanchez.** "This project is a testament to the positive effects that a public-private partnerships can have for the public and surrounding community."

Work on the bridge included:

- Creation of new accessible approach paths,
- Creation of an accessible profile on bridge,
- Installation of new accessibility-compliant railings in front of existing balustrade,
- Restoring eroded river bank adjacent to bridge,
- Repairs to gutters and scuppers/drainage,
- Restoring brick masonry,
- Repairing the underside of bridge arches and interior concrete spalls.
- Installation of historically replicated lighting mounted on the bridge balustrades and end obelisks monuments
- Creation of new approach path lighting and new architectural wash lighting of the bridge elevations and underside of the arches.

The total cost of the project was \$3 million, of which Harvard University contributed \$150,000.

The ribbon cutting was held during the annual RiverSing Celebration, **a** growing annual tradition that features over 100 performers who **sing** along the banks of the Charles River.

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The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), an agency of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, oversees 450,000 acres of parks and forests, beaches, bike trails, watersheds, dams, and parkways. Led by Commissioner Carol Sanchez, the agency's mission is to protect, promote, and enhance our common wealth of natural, cultural, and recreational resources. To learn more about DCR, our facilities, and our programs, please visit www.mass.gov/dcr. Contact us at mass.parks@state.ma.us.

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